

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 12, AMEND claims 1, 10, 11 and 13, and ADD new claim 14 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A client administration method of administering a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the method comprising:

a presence-storing step of accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information client by client;

a notification recipient-storing step of storing identifiers of watcher clients for respective clients, each of the watcher clients being provided with the presence information of at least one of the clients in the clients group;

an identifier-changing step of accepting a change of ~~the~~ an identifier of the first client;

a decision step of deciding all ~~a watcher client of the first client or at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client~~ to be one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client; ~~and~~

an identifier-transmitting step of transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients decided in said decision step, and

a notification recipient updating step of accepting a request for a change notification of presence information of the new identifier of the first client from the identifier notification recipient, correlating the new identifier of the first client and the identifier of the identifier notification recipient and storing the same.

2. (Currently Amended) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the decision step deciding ~~all~~ watcher clients of the first client or at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client to be identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client.

3. (Original) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:
a subscriber client-storing step of storing identifiers of subscriber clients so that each subscriber client is associated with at least one client that provides the presence information thereto, the subscriber client being provided with the presence information of at least one client of the clients group; and

said decision step deciding a client to be an identifier notification recipient, the client being both a watcher client of the first client and a subscriber client of the first client.

4. (Original) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:
a presence-notifying step of notifying the first client's watcher client of new presence information according to the setting of the presence information;

a notification history-storing step of storing a notification history of the presence information; and

said decision step extracting at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client based on the notification history, and deciding to be one or more identifier notification recipients.

5. (Original) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:
a messaging step of administering distribution of text messages exchanged between the clients;

a distribution history step of storing a distribution history of distributed text messages;
and

said decision step extracting at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client based on the distribution history, and deciding to be one or more identifier notification recipients.

6. (Original) The client monitor method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:
said presence-storing step storing the presence information of the clients so that the presence information is associated with an access level, the access level limiting notification recipients of the presence information of the clients;

said notification recipient-storing step further storing the access level of each watcher client; and

said decision step deciding a portion of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client to be the identifier notification recipients based on the access level of each watcher client.

7. (Original) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, wherein, said identifier-transmitting step further transmitting display data for displaying the change of the identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients.

8. (Original) The client administration method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said identifier-transmitting step further transmitting attribute information related to the change of the identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients.

9. (Original) The client administration method as set forth in claim 8, wherein said identifier-changing step accepting registration of the attribute information.

10. (Currently Amended) A client administration device that administers a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the device comprising:

a presence-storing unit ~~for~~ accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information client by client;

a notification recipient-storing unit ~~for~~ storing identifiers of watcher clients for respective clients, each of the watcher clients being provided with the presence information of at least one of the clients in the clients group;

an identifier-changing unit ~~for~~ accepting a change of the identifier of the first client;

a decision unit ~~for~~ deciding all a watcher client of the first client or at least one of a plurality of watcher clients of the first client to be one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client; ~~and~~

an identifier-transmitting unit ~~for~~ transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients decided by said decision unit, and

a notification recipient updating unit accepting a request for a change notification of presence information of the new identifier of the first client from the identifier notification recipient, correlating the new identifier of the first client and the identifier of the of the identifier notification recipient and storing the same.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing a client administration program for administering a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the program controlling a computer system, when executed, to perform a method comprising: executing a presence-storing step of

accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information client by client; ~~a notification recipient storing step of~~ storing identifiers of watcher clients for respective clients, each of the watcher clients being provided with the presence information of at least one of the clients in the clients group; ~~an identifier changing step of~~ accepting a change of the identifier of the first client; ~~a decision step of~~ deciding all ~~a watcher client of the first client or at least one of a plurality of~~ watcher clients of the first client to be one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client; ~~and an identifier transmitting step of~~ transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients decided in said decision step, and accepting a request for a change notification of presence information of the new identifier of the first client from the identifier notification recipient, correlating the new identifier of the first client and the identifier of the identifier notification recipient and storing the same.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A client administration method of administering a group of clients, each client providing presence information, the method comprising: ~~a presence storing step of~~ accepting a setting of presence information of the clients including a first client, and storing the presence information client by client; ~~information storing step of~~ storing client-relationship information for respective clients, the client-relationship information containing at least one or more identifiers of one or more clients relating to provision of presence information of the first client thereto and/or one or more identifiers of one or more clients relating to a request made by the first client, the request being for provision of presence information of those clients to the first client; ~~an identifier changing step of~~ accepting a change of ~~the~~ an identifier of the first client; ~~a decision step of~~ deciding one or more clients to be one or more identifier notification recipients according to the change of the identifier of the first client, one or more identifiers of one or more clients being contained in the client relationship information stored in association with the first client; ~~and an identifier transmitting step of~~ transmitting a new identifier of the first client to one or more identifier notification recipients decided in said decision step, and

accepting a request for a change notification of presence information of the new identifier of the first client from the identifier notification recipient, correlating the new identifier of the first client and the identifier of the identifier notification recipient and storing the same.

14. (New) An instant messaging administration method, comprising
 - storing a list of user identifiers used by a client, presence information of the client and for each of the user identifiers, a list of accepted identifiers corresponding to other clients that are trusted by the client and are associated with at least one of the user identifiers;
 - deciding which of the other clients will be at least one notification recipient for a selected user identifier of the client;
 - transmitting the selected user identifier to the at least one identifier notification recipient;
 - accepting a request for a change notification of presence information of the selected user identifier from the at least one identifier notification recipient; and
 - storing a correlation of the selected user identifier and the accepted identifier of each of the at least one identifier notification recipient.